

GOD'S *free Grace in the Salvation of Sinners,*
proved from the Conversion of St. Paul.

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S E R M O N

Preach'd at

N E W I N G T O N.

B Y

GEORGE WHITEFIELD. A.B.
of *Pembroke College, Oxford.*



L O N D O N:

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God's free Grace in the Gospel of St. Paul.

3 E R M O N

N D W I N C T O M



CEORGE FIELD A.D.

A O W D O M

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A C T S ix. 22.

But Saul increased the more in Strength, and confounded the Jews which dwelt at Damascus, proving that this is very Christ.

NOTHING would try formal Professors and Pretenders to Christianity so much as a trying Time; a Time of Persecution would separate the Chaff from the Wheat; that would prove who loved Christ in reality; then we should see who follows Christ purely out of Love to his Doctrines, and Commands, or who it is follows him only in Name and Shew. Persecuting Time is always a trying Time. The Men of this World may wonder what I mean by talking of Persecution in a Christian Country, and may be ready to ask, How can such a Thing be? But the Spirit of the World is the same now as formerly; they who live after the Flesh will persecute them who live after the Spirit; for those who live godly in Christ Jesus, not one Soul of them will pass through this World without Persecution; and there was no Christians in any
Age

Age but what have experienced the Truth of these Sayings; they have found many *Sauls* breathing out Threatnings and Slaughters against them, for no other Reason but because they have worshipped Christ Jesus in Sincerity and Truth: And if they do but observe the fiery Zeal with which these Persecutors are filled, we should wonder at the Patience and Forbearance of God, in not striking them dead when they are slaying and destroying his People; but he not only preserves them here, but often manifests his Power in bringing them from persecuting *Sauls*, to become praying *Pauls*: And when once he has brought a Soul, by his free Grace, out of the Darknes of Persecution, then that Person can never be satisfied for declaring the Wonders of God, and telling the great Things Jesus Christ has done for his Soul.

And no Example so is great as that of *Saul*, who, when he was changed from persecuting the Christians, and was opposed by the *Jews*, he *increased the more in Strength, and confounded the Jews which dwelt at Damascus, proving that this is very Christ.*

There is a great Work wrought of late, by the mighty Power of God, upon the Hearts of many; many has been turned to the Truth as it is in Jesus, and the Lord is still getting himself the Victory; he is still breaking the
Ser-

Serpent's Head ; but the Time will come, and is now hastening, when he will permit him to bruise our Heel. We must expect to be persecuted, Satan will bring all his Forces against us : The Storm is now gathering ; it is at present no bigger than a Man's Hand ; but by and by, when it is full, it will break, and will fall on the Church of God, and, therefore, it is the Duty of Ministers to forewarn their Hearers thereof. And,

- I. To caution them not to bring Sufferings upon themselves.
- II To strengthen them, in a suffering Time, to stand stedfast for Jesus Christ.

It is the Duty of Ministers to caution their Hearers not to bring Sufferings upon themselves.

And that, my Brethren, I shall do from an Example ; and there is none more remarkable than the Behaviour of the Christians which dwelt at *Damascus* ; and that we may the more fully perceive this, I shall go thro' the whole Story : And we find at Verse the first, *And Saul yet breathing out Threatnings and Slaughters against the Disciples of the Lord, went unto the high Priest.*

Observe

Observe here, my Brethren, with what Colour he is now introduced. It says, *And Saul yet breathing out Threatnings, &c.* he had been long before a zealous Persecutor; had promoted the Death of God's People: He was, it may be, forward above his Years, and distinguished himself for his Hatred and Malice against God's People. He esteemed the Praises of Men before the Praises of God. His Zeal was not according to Knowledge; he could not be contented with breathing out Threatnings, but he must breathe out Slaughter too. Oh how zealous was he in threatening the poor Christians! For we may make this Observation, that Persecutors, while they continue in their Persecutions, wax worse and worse: *Saul's Zeal* increased every Day---he went on daily in persecuting; and he could not rest satisfied till he had brought them bound unto *Jerusalem*.

In order to do this, my Brethren, to bring his Designs to pass, he goes and gains Power from the high Priest, and desires of him Letters to *Damascus*, to the Synagogues, that if he found any on his Way, whether they were Men or Women, he might bring them bound unto *Jerusalem*.

Observe how pitifully he speaks of the poor Christians; if he found any, on the Way, Enthusiastical People, or, who were religiously
mad,

mad, as he might represent them dangerous to the State. Well, under Cover of this, *St. Paul* obtains his Commission to bring these poor Christians, in Bonds, unto *Jerusalem*; and, no doubt, very readily set forward on his Journey, for he was so red hot a Persecutor, and so zealous against the poor Christians, that he made no Stay, but joyfully set forward, now he had the Power to destroy those against whom he had a Will before.

And this, my Brethren, answers to the Gospel Time, as Face does to Face in the Water: Many have the Will to destroy us, but they cannot obtain the Power; the Laws of the Land, and not those of Conscience, restrain them: They would willingly destroy us.

It is out of a false Spirit that *Saul*, in the first beginning of Christianity, did persecute the Disciples of Jesus: Christ's Servants were always the World's Fools; the Enemies to the World will be persecuted by the Lovers thereof. How pleased, my Brethren, was our young Zealot when he was going to *Damascus*? And, no doubt, but the nearer he drew thereto, the greater was his Joy: But as he journey'd, he came near unto *Damascus*, and suddenly there shined round about him, a Light from Heaven.

God let him go near perhaps, exceeding near; but tho' he went so nigh, God would

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not

not suffer him to go in; and the nearer he came, no doubt, the Church had heard of the Expedition of their great Enemy, and was offering up their Prayers, no doubt, for Strength to die for the Lord Jesus Christ, if they were called thereto. It is much better, my Brethren, to die for our Master, than for to deny him: And tho' *Saul* was studying how to accomplish the total Destruction of these enthusiast and religious mad People, and pleased with what he was going to put in Execution, and what a great Piece of Service he was doing to the Church and State, by destroying those who differed from the establish'd Church, and who were the Underminers thereof; but how great was his Disappointment, when suddenly there shined round about him, a great Light from Heaven, and he fell to the Earth, and heard a Voice, saying unto him, *Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me?* And he said, *Who art thou, Lord?* and the Lord said, *I am Jesus whom thou persecutest; it is hard to kick against the Pricks.*

He that thought of persecuting, lies groveling on the Earth, and he hears a small still Voice, tho' a very powerful one, *Saul, Saul, why persecuting thou me?* God spoke twice to *Saul*, that he might think how he had repeated his Persecution against the poor
Chri-

Christians ; or else, *Saul* was so much engaged with his Designs, that he heard not when God called the first Time, and, therefore, the Lord calls again, *Saul, Saul*. *Saul* did not think that he was persecuting of Jesus Christ, but the Disturbers of the *Jewish* State, the Enthusiasts of that Day, those who frequented religious Societies, who, instead of going to the *Jewish* Diversions, were singing of Psalms and praying and meditating on the Grace and Favour of God, these were thought methodically mad ; and *Saul* thought them to have a Design against the State, and, therefore, was willing to suppress them : But he was obliged to stop, and the Lord says, *Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me? Who art thou, Lord*, says *Saul*? Good God ! how the Man's Tone is changed, *Who art thou Lord?* how humble, how meek, my Brethren, does he speak : Thus one Word from the Lord Jesus Christ, can make the greatest Persecutor become sensible of the Evil of the Works that they are engaged in, and be obliged to leave it, and instead of persecuting of them, be brought to go Hand in Hand with them.

Jesus Christ tells him who he was : *I am Jesus whom thou persecutest*. Jesus Christ tells him, that he persecuted himself ; for Jesus Christ, my Brethren, takes all the Injuries done to his People, as done to himself ;

and if Jesus Christ thus takes Notice of what is done to his People, how should this excite us to sing forth his Praises, to pray unto him, to hear the Word of God, because these are Duties he has commanded, and expects to find his Friends and Lovers in the Use of: And since we see how Christ, my Brethren, takes Notice of what Usage his People meet with, this should be an Encouragement to the People of God, not to regard what the World says, what the Jestes and Reproaches of the World are against you, the Lord Jesus Christ looks on them as all done against him. *I am Jesus whom thou persecutest.* It was an Instance of the free Grace of the Lord that, instead of talking with *Saul*, he had not struck him dead on the Spot: No, my Brethren, the Lord acted with great Mercy and Compassion, he was about to bring *Saul* to himself, and this all owing to the free Grace and Love of the Lord Jesus Christ. Indeed our modern Divines tells us of a Fitness in Men, and that God foreseeing us to be good Creatures gives us his Grace: I say, it is all owing to the free Love of the Lord Jesus Christ, for when you are justified before God, it is without any Respect to your Works, either past, present, or to come.

What Fitness now was there, can any one imagine, in *Saul*, when God gives him his
Grace,

Grace, or where was his Disposition to Goodness? No, my Brethren, he was a zealous Persecutor, and if the Lord, by his free Grace, had not stopp'd him, he would have gone on till he had fell into Hell; but here the Lord Jesus Christ saw this Persecutor, and that he was lost without Christ.

St. Paul cries, *Who art thou, Lord?* The Lord when he first convinces us of Sin, and we see how we have offended against Jesus Christ, we are apt to cry, *Who art thou Lord that I have been thus sinning against?* And when we are convinced that it was the Lord Jesus Christ, and are convinced of Sin, then the Lord convinces us of Righteousness: Then we see, my Brethren, the Need we have for an imputed Righteousness, and that we are fallen in *Adam*, and of our Impossibility of recovering ourselves from our fallen State, and that Christ is the only Way whereby we can be recovered.

I am Jesus whom thou persecutest; I am thy Jesus. What a Paradox is here? *I am Jesus, I am thy Jesus; I will be thy Saviour.* Here was a Manifestation of the free Love of the Lord Jesus Christ; that while we are yet Enemies to him, he hath loved us, and gave himself for us, that when we deserve nothing but Damnation, when we are running to our own Destruction, then we are prevented by

the Lord Jesus Christ ; and these Words should comfort all who wait on the Lord. What tho' you have gone on in persecuting the Lord Jesus Christ, turn to him now, by Faith, seek unto him alone, and he will be your Jesus ; he shall be your Saviour, as he was *Saul's*. How soon was the Change wrought ? And he trembling and astonishing said, *Lord, what wilt thou have me to do ?* Who knows what *St. Paul* felt at this Time. *What wilt thou have me to do ?* Now he has Faith, in the Lord Jesus. *What wilt thou have me to do ?* Thus, my Brethren, no sooner had the Lord revealed himself to him, but he was willing to be doing something for him : Faith, is so far from being what some tell us, that it opens a Door to all Licentiousness, that it more rather bars and bolts all Licentiousness out. The Faith they preach up is a living Faith ; a Faith working by Love ; an active Faith : Faith without Works is dead, but if it is true Faith it will work ; for, my dear Brethren, true Faith in the Heart will be restless.

I appeal to all Christians who have felt the Love of God in their Hearts, Whether they could be satisfied with sitting still, and not be doing any Thing for God ? Alas, my Brethren, those who can do this, are not Christians, indeed, they may be Professors of his
Name

Name, but, my Brethren, their Actions give the Profession; for all Christians will be inquiring as *Saul*, *Lord*, *what would'st thou have me to do?* What will be agreeable to thy Will? Shew me thy Paths and I will walk therein.

And the Lord said, *Arise, and go into the City and it shall be told thee what thou must do; and the Men which journeyed with him stood speechless, hearing a Voice but seeing no Man.*

Saul was willing to do what the Lord would have him, and the Lord tells him what to do: Now here is an Instance of wonderful Grace, *Saul* is taken and his Companions left: Thus the Lord chooseth whom he pleaseth and the Wind bloweth where it listeth, and we hear the Sound thereof, but cannot tell whence it cometh, or whether it goeth: The other heard a Voice, but they saw no Man: And this, my Brethren, shews the different Effects of the Word of God upon different Hearers. Those who only came out of Curiosity, and to cavil at the Preacher, or to observe something, whereat they may jest or cavil, return as they came, empty and hardened; but them that come out of a sincere Desire to hear what the Lord would say unto them, these are watered by the Power of the Word, and the Spirit of God sets home the Word preached, to their Hearts, that they are sen-

fible the Word came from God, and then go home rejoicing.

Our Lord bids him arise, and when his Eyes were open'd he saw no Man; but they led him, by the Hand, and brought him into *Damascus*.

And when his Eyes were open'd he saw no Man, save his Companions. How many have their Eyes open'd and yet see nothing as they ought; The Blindness of *Saul's* Eyes is a proper Emblem of the Blindness of his Mind: Our Minds are naturally dark and alienated from God; but when the Lord Jesus Christ comes with Power upon our Souls, then the Darkness of our Minds is taken away by the Light of the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ: And they brought him into *Damascus*. Here, my Brethren, of Observation, he that thought of going into *Damascus*, like a Lyon, behold, my Brethren, he is led like a Lamb.

And he was three Days without Sight, and neither did eat nor drink.

Saul this Time, no doubt, was under great Convictions, and great Trouble from Satan; and now he might be said, my Brethren, to be under the Pangs of the New-Birth. No Pleasure of the World would be of any Service or delight to him; What would it have been to have told *Saul* of all the Diversions which

which the World could give? What would he have given for a Calm in his own Mind? O what a Horror must *Saul* undergo whilst he lay in this Condition?

And, my Brethren, when any of you are first awakened to a Sense of your lost Condition, how terrible was your Condition before the Lord Jesus Christ was revealed unto you? Your carnal Relations were amazed what was the Matter, and because they are Strangers to the Work upon their own Souls, they know not what to think thereof, and therefore, presently conclude you are mad; and when you are under this Bondage, they are only for sending you to *Bedlam*; but if, my Brethren, any of you are under this Condition, do not fear but you shall find Comfort; wait patiently for the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ, for he will love and comfort ye there. Fear not but wait on the Lord.

The Lord Jesus Christ told *Saul*, that it should be told to him what he should do, and Jesus Christ did not forget his Promise, but sent a Disciple to comfort him, as in the next Verse.

And there was a certain Disciple at Damascus named, Ananias, and to him said the Lord, in a Vision, Ananias, and he said, Behold I am here Lord.

Ananias

Ananias was a good Man and kept up a daily Communion with God himself; and when God called unto him, he answered as good *Zecharia* did, *Here am I, Lord.* He was not afraid of the Lord, he did not run from God when he called him unto him: Sinners are afraid of God, and when he calls are for hiding their Faces from him, lest that he should pour out deserved Wrath upon them; but good Christians, who keep up a daily Communion with God, rejoice when the Lord speaketh to them; they are rejoiced when the Lord hideth not his Face, but when he smileth upon them.

And the Lord said unto him, *Arise, and go into the Street which is called, Straight, and inquire in the House of one Judas, for one called, Saul, of Tarsus, for behold he prayeth.*

My dear Brethren, here is a Lesson of Comfort: Jesus Christ not only takes Notice of your Sufferings and Reproaches you meet with in this World, but likewise, he takes Notice of [the House wherein his People lives. The polite Gentlemen of our Day are for excluding God's particular Providence out of the World; so they would make God no more than an idle Spectator of what passes here below; but Jesus Christ, my Brethren, observes all your Actions, and sees and considers with what End they were performed, whether you had

had an Eye to his Glory in the Performance thereof or not; none of your Ways are hid from him, he sees with what Intention you come to hear his Word, whether it was only out of Curiosity, or itching Ears, or with a Desire to be instructed in what the Lord would have you do: This should make you, my Brethren, set a Watch and a Guard over your Actions, considering that the Lord Jesus his observing all your Ways, and they must, my dear Brethren, be all called over again in the Presence of Angels, Men and Devils.

Go into the Street called, Straight, to the House of Judas, and inquire for one called, Saul, of Tarsus, for behold he prayeth.

Observe, my Brethren, how it is ushered in, *Behold he prayeth*. If any one had told *Saul* that he had never prayed, how would the whole *Pharisee* have risen? how would he have despised the Person for an Enthusiast and Madman? But God himself says, *Behold he prayeth*, which plainly denotes, that he had not prayed before; *Saul*, no doubt, had said over many a Prayer; but alas, he never prayed over one before; he never prayed before from his Heart; he never felt his Prayer before; now he saw that he wanted Christ to be his Mediator, and, therefore, was sensible of the Necessity of his having what he prayed for: And if, my Brethren, you go to Church
and

and read over your Prayers; but what are you the better unless you feel the Weight of your Sins, and the Necessity you have of Pardon from the Lord Jesus Christ? 'Till this is the Case, my Brethren, you may go to Church and read over your Prayers, almost continually; you may be constantly reading over a *Week's Preparation for the Sacrament*; yea, you may read over a thousand Manuals of Prayers, and if you are not awakened and convinced of the Necessity you have of an Interest in Christ, they are no better than the Papists *Ave Maria's*, or their *Pater-nosters*; you may have the Gift of Prayer when you have not the Grace of it; and if you can live without Prayer you live without God in the World. Nothing could be mentioned more to prove *Saul* a true Convert, than *that he prayeth*: Prayer must proceed from the Heart, or it is only a mocking of God; you must find your Hearts drawing on towards God, otherwise, you are drawing nigh unto God with your Lips, while your Hearts are far from him.

Then *Ananias* answered, *Lord, I have heard, by many, of this Man, how much Evil he hath done to t y Saints at Jerusalem: And here he hath Authority, from the Chief Priest, to bind all that call on thy Name.*

Shall

Shall I commend *Ananias* for this Reply? No, my Brethren, I commend, I praise him not; for it proceeded from a Self-Righteousness in his Heart, when *Ananias* forgot that nothing in himself made any Difference between him and *Saul*; No, they were alike by Nature, and if there was a Difference, it was owing to the free Grace of God, and therefore, we are not to value ourselves, my Brethren, because we run not into that same Excess with others, but to adore the free Grace of God in preserving us from it; if we were not to be restrained by the mighty Power of God, we should be as great Persecutors as *Saul* was, therefore, we should not despise the Persons of any, on that Account, tho' it is your Duty, my Brethren, to hate their Vices and Ways; yet do not bear them any ill Will as to themselves.

Ananias's Unbelief was high; he had not Faith to go at the bidding of Christ, at first, he was afraid on the Account of what he heard of *Saul*: And is not this your Case, my Brethren, are not you afraid to go to God on account of your Sins? Tho' Christ invites you to come, still you go not; you have not Faith to believe that Christ will save you. Tho' you go to Church and repeat the Creed, and say, *You believe in God, the Father Almighty, Maker of Heaven and Earth;* yea,

yea, you may repeat the three Creeds every Day, and yet not have true Faith; Faith is not a bare Assent to Things credible, as credible; No, it must be in the Heart; they who think a bare Belief is Faith, or a bare Assent to the Truths of the Gospel, that that is Faith, they are only deceiving themselves; for this is not the Faith that worketh by Love; this Faith is not so great as the Faith of the Devils; No, this is a groundless Faith: And there are Thousands who call themselves Christians, whose Faith is only according to the Rules which they are commanded to by their Parents, Masters, or Friends, without once examining whether it is a Gospel Faith or not. This, my Brethren, is a great Error of our Day; we flatter ourselves that believing the Truths of the Gospel, is Faith, a saving Faith; but, indeed, my dear Brethren, it is not. You may have Faith in the Head, but not in the Heart; there may be Knowledge in the Head when there is no Grace in the Heart: This is a Truth which is founded upon the Word of God; But observe, my Brethren, what the Lord, in the next Verse, says to *Ananias*.

And the Lord said unto him, *Go thy Way, for he is a chosen Vessel unto me, to bear my Name before the Gentiles and Kings, and the Children of Israel: For I will shew him how great*

great Things he must suffer for my Name's Sake.

Here, my Brethren, we may observe how immediately Suffering follow Christianity : The Way which Christians walk, is the Way which is spread with Thorns and Briars : You cannot go to Heaven without Persecution ; you must expect Sufferings and Trials in your Way to Glory : If you live godly in the World you will be hated.

Jesus Christ does not tell *Ananias* what Preferments he should have ; No ; but *I will shew him what great Things he shall suffer for my Name's Sake* : Then that Love of the Lord Jesus Christ will never have the World's Esteem.

And a Christian rejoices, my dear Brethren, to be counted worthy to suffer for the Name of the Lord Jesus Christ. In many Tribulations you shall overcome, and thro' many Trials you shall go to Glory : Then do not fear, my dear Brethren, to be singularly Good, for the Lord hath chosen you to declare his Name before the Great and Mighty of this World ; for he hath chosen the Weak to confound the Strong, that the Power may be of God ; therefore, be not discouraged, tho' you may be esteem'd Enthusiasts, and Madmen, those who are only fit for *Bedlam* ;
for

for you must not fear to suffer great Things for the Lord's Sake.

And *Ananias* went his Way and entered into the House, and putting his Hands on him said, *Brother Saul, the Lord, even Jesus that appeared unto thee in the Way that thou camest, hath sent me that thou might'st receive thy Sight, and be filled with the Holy Ghost.*

Observe here, the kind Appellation that *Ananias* gives *Brother Saul*; he did not call him Persecutor; he did not tell him what a wicked, vile Wretch he was; No, he had forgot that; but says, *Brother Saul*. It is no Matter what a Man has been if he is now a Christian; and the viler he has been, with the greater Joy do you receive him, whenever it is the Will of God to bring a Man home unto him, and make him a Child of God, if it should be the Pleasure of Christ to esteem him a Brother.

Brother Saul, the Lord hath sent me, that thou should'st receive thy Sight. Saul, my Brethren, was dark and blind before, but the Lord sent his Servant to him to heal him of his Blindness. The Case of *Saul*, is the Case of Us; there is a Blindness upon our Souls; there is a Darknes upon our Minds; while we remain under the Spirit of Bondage we are in Dread and in Distress; but Jesus will send his Ministers and direct them to speak a Word suitable

suitable to your Case; a Word of Comfort and Direction to you, and then you shall be filled with the Holy Ghost. God could have converted *Saul* without sending *Ananias* to him; but the Lord was pleased to put an Honour upon his Ministers, upon his Servants then, and so he does still, for he often makes Use of weak Instruments to be of Service to their Souls; and this he does to shew the Necessity of attending upon the Word preached; and tho' he makes Use of Instruments, yet, my Brethren, the Glory belongs to God, and to him alone: We must not think it comes only from Man; No, my dear Brethren, it is only from God, and to him only you are to be thankful.

And immediately there fell from his Eyes as it had been Scales, and he received Sight forthwith, and arose and he was baptized.

The Time was come, my Brethren, that *Saul* was to be no longer in Distress; but the Lord would reveal himself unto him in Love. Now the Scales fell off his Eyes: The Scales of Persecution; the Scales of Hatred, and the Scales of Sin; the Scales from the Eye of his Mind was now gone: And who but those who have felt the same mighty Power of God, can imagine what a new World *Saul* saw. He had new Desires, new Ends, and new Views; his persecuting Temper was taken

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away

away, and he had now no Enmity in his Heart to the poor Christians: His Heart was full of Love, full of Joy, full of Peace; and he that counted all Fools for following the Lord Jesus Christ, is now become a Fool for the Sake of that Jesus, whom before he persecuted.

Here is a Display of the Power who can turn the Hearts of his Enemies, as the Rivers of Water: If he speaks the Word it shall be done. Thus far may Persecutors go, but they shall go no farther. Let this, therefore, encourage you to keep close to the Lord in a Day of Trouble.

And when he had received Meat he was strengthened. Then was Saul certain Days with the Disciples, which were at Damascus.

When, my Brethren, Saul was converted to God, he kept with the People of God; then he conversed with the Disciples: And who can think what Joy Christians felt, to think, that he that came to destroy them, was changed and brought out of Darkness, into marvelous Light; that was their Brother, and not their Persecutor. What singing of Hymns and Songs, was there in every Room where the Christians met. A little while before they were hiding for fear of the *Jews*, but now they were filled with Joy to behold their Persecutor, as a poor Sinner, begging as *Jonadab* did,

did, to have the Right Hand of Fellowship, to become one with them, and be a Brother in all that the Lord might call them to.

Let us, therefore, my dear Brethren, not despair of the worst of Sinners, for the Lord's Arm is not shortned that he cannot save; No, my dear Brethren, he is the same Yesterday, To-day, and forever: He can soon make persecuting *Sauls* to become praying and humble *Pauls*.

And straightway he preached Christ in the Synagogues, that he is the Son of God.

They, my Brethren, who have Jesus Christ in their Hearts, will soon have him in their Mouths; and they who thus have Christ, will find little Room for the World. How soon can mighty Grace make a mighty Change? Here's a Wonder, he that came to persecute them is now preaching to them: He now preached the Truth, as it was in Jesus. He did not fill their Ears with moral Philosophy, nor did he preach up the Fitness of the Creature; No, he was an Instance of God's free Grace himself, and, therefore, would preach that up to others. He did not preach himself; he did not study for Rhetorick, or Art in his Preaching; No, he felt what he preach'd: And none can preach Christ, my dear Brethren, from the Heart, who only have him in the Head; they cannot preach Christ ex-

perimentally, who never had no Experience of him; they can never preach Christ rightly who never felt Christ truly.

No doubt *Saul's* preaching made a great Noise in the World; the High Priest, the *Jews*, and all the *Pharisees* of the Time, were disappointed in their Expectations, and, no doubt, were greatly surprized, to hear that their *Goliath* was slain. To hear now, my Brethren, of a Sinner's being brought home to Jesus Christ, and, that he can no more delight himself in the Pleasures of his carnal Companions, is surprizing to them, they cannot think the Meaning thereof: And they are like the *Jews* in respect of *Saul*.

They were amazed, and said, *Is not this He that destroyed them which called on this Name at Jerusalem? and came hither for that Intent, that he might bring them bound unto the Chief Priests?*

And it is, my Brethren, exactly the same Case now; if you acknowledge the Lord Jesus Christ, it is Matter of Amazement to your Companions, and Relations, after the Flesh; and if you are become one of Jesus Christ, you must expect to be counted a Fool for his Sake, and hear the World cry, *What a mighty Saint he is become of a sudden! Are you led away too? Are you deceived? What, are you one of his Followers? Why he is only going to deceive*

deceive you; and if you follow him, or his Method, you will be religiously mad; he is only going to make you methodically mad, and so fit you for Bedlam: Sure you will not become an Enthusiast at last? Many, many, my Brethren, of you have had these Things said to you; you experience the Truth of what I speak; if preaching up the Doctrine of the New-Birth, of inward Holiness, of the free Grace of Jesus Christ, is to be an Enthusiast, God grant I may be more and more so; and if your hearing and believing this make you Enthusiasts, I would to God, my dear Brethren, you were all Enthusiasts.

Let the World say what they will of you, take no Notice of them, but go on your Way rejoicing; be not afraid of any Thing they threaten or say; instead of being daunted, pray that the Words of my Text may be fulfilled in you. But Saul increased the more in Strength, and confounded the Jews which dwelt at Damascus, confirming that this is very Christ.

Notwithstanding all the Amazement the Jews were under, Saul preached this is very Christ; and do not be afraid of Man. God's Servants must have Trials: Expect, my Brethren, when you begin your Christian Walk, to meet with many Discouragements in the Way; but nevertheless, my Brethren, take
Courage,

Courage, God will preserve and protect you, tho' you may be cast out by Men ; bid them Defiance, I say, do it again, my Brethren, bid Defiance both to Men and Devils ; tell them that they may do their worst, you will confess Jesus Christ in every Place ; be not afraid of the Wrath of Man, tho' it rage never so much, let your Love to Jesus Christ make you go on your Way rejoicing, in Spight of all that the Malice of the World, or the Rage of Devils can invent. They can go no farther than they are permitted, and if they kill the Body, the Soul is beyond their Reach, that, my Brethren, is in too safe Hands for to be hurt by Men, or Devils ; and now take up the Resolution of being singularly good, and you will find Peace in your own Souls, which the World cannot destroy.

Sinners a Word to you : And here is a Lesson to all here present, however, for you who are now from God : However you have persecuted the Church of God, however you have ridiculed the Servants of God, and counted them Fools, let me advise you to turn unto the Lord Jesus Christ, and he will forgive you your Sins, and your Iniquities he will remember no more.

I do not despair of the greatest Wretch, the greatest Profligate on Earth ; No, turn unto the Lord and you shall find Mercy for your Souls ;

Souls; he had Mercy upon *Saul's*, and has had Mercy upon Thousands of Souls, and turn unto him and he will have Mercy upon you. What tho' you are Enemies to God and Goodness, have been Despisers to Jesus Christ, have breathed out Threatnings and Slaughter against his Servants, I offer Salvation to you by the Lord Jesus Christ; he is the same Yesterday, To-day and forever. O come unto him, my guilty Brethren, I beseech you to come unto him, and accept of him upon his own Terms, for there is no Salvation without the Lord Jesus Christ. It is a faithful Saying, and worthy of all Acceptation, *That Jesus Christ came into the World to save Sinners*, of whom I am Chief: If you can but see yourselves the Chief of Sinners and are made to cry out, *Who art thou, Lord?* you shall find the Lord Jesus Christ telling thee what thou should do. O go to Christ for Salvation. I do not, my Brethren, preach up your own Works; No, I preach up only the free Grace of God, Christ justifies the Ungodly. Here is good Tidings for Sinners to come and accept of the Mercy and Grace of the Lord Jesus Christ: Here is a Door set open, by the Blood of Christ, for Sinners to come in at. I give you, my Brethren, an Invitation to come in; there is no climbing, or going any other Way: You can do

do nothing to merit Heaven ; you can do nothing to satisfy the Justice of God, Jesus Christ has done that already ; he has done that instead of you.

O come to the Lord Jesus and rely, my Brethren, wholly upon him, do not think you are to do what you can, and Christ is to make up the Deficiency. Jesus Christ is all in all. Who among you is offended ? I preach not in high flown Words : I come not in the Excellency of Speech ; I was not to please your Ears, my Brethren, with Rhetorick ; No, I preach the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ in all Plainness. I speak for Jesus Christ, and it is the Gospel of Jesus Christ, and, therefore, Jesus Christ will bless it.

O that I could hear you crying out, *Who art thou, Lord?* Then Jesus Christ would reveal himself to you ; and they who believe on him shall feel the Power of his Resurrection now, as well as formerly. Oh that you, my Brethren, would but look unto Jesus Christ : Do not stay for dressing yourselves ; Jesus Christ will away with your Rags ; he despises you not because you are poor ; No, do but abase yourselves and exalt God ; and tho' we have been never so vile, yet, if you do but turn to Christ now, he will own you and accept of you : He will not tell you of your past Faults.

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For when the Lord Jesus was crucified, and his Disciples had forsaken him, and *Peter* had denied him, he does not say, when he was risen, *Go tell those Traitors that forsook me ; Go tell that Rebel, Peter, who deny'd me ;* No, none of these Words, my Brethren, came from Jesus ; but, *Go tell my Brethren, that I am risen ; go and comfort their drooping Spirits, and comfort Peter, tell them, O tell them, I am not angry with them :* And if you Sinners will but turn unto Christ, he will not tell you of your past Sins, he will not revile you or turn you back ; no, he will receive you joyfully.

Here I come now to invite you to come to Jesus Christ ; O do but forsake your *Dalilabs*, your darling Lusts, your beloved Sins, and come to Christ and he will have Mercy upon you ; your Sins were nailed to the Cross, and shall never be removed, shall never be brought against you : Then do not delay, but come, I beseech you, in the Bowels of Love and Tendernefs, to come unto Jesus Christ. I preach up Damnation to no one, nor I despair of no one : No, I call you to accept of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Come, my guilty Brethren, come to Christ, and if you have continued in your Sins never so long, do but come to Christ and they shall be washed away, in his Blood ; they shall be

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all

all done away in the Blood that he shed on Mount *Calvary*. Jesus Christ had Mercy on a persecuting *Saul*, and if you will but cry out, *Who art thou, Lord?* he will have Mercy upon you. O consider, now is the accepted Time, now is the Day of Salvation; then fly, fly unto Jesus now, give not Sleep to thine Eyes, or Slumber to thine Eye Lids, till thou hast an Interest in Jesus Christ.

Come, my guilty Brethren, I beseech you, to come and accept of the Love of Christ while you are here, for there is no such Thing in the Grave: Then, my dear Brethren, you know not how soon you may be called hence, and be no more seen: How know you but a Fit of the Appoplexy may seize you before you arrive to your Habitations; and where will your immortal Souls be then? Oh come to Christ this Instant, and he shall receive you, and be one with him; you shall find Peace and Satisfaction in your own Souls, and shall have Joy in the Holy Ghost, and you shall be taken up with him and live with this Jesus, singing unto him forever; but if you will not accept of Jesus Christ you must go and dwell with them to all Eternity: And can you dwell in everlasting Burnings? Does not the Thoughts make your Blood chill again? And if you would avoid this, come unto Christ, and you shall escape it.

it. And oh that you may be Wise, that you may consider your latter End.

Now to Father, Son and Holy Ghost, be ascribed, as is most due, all Honour, Power, Glory, &c.

May the Grace of the Lord Jesus Christ be with you all, &c.



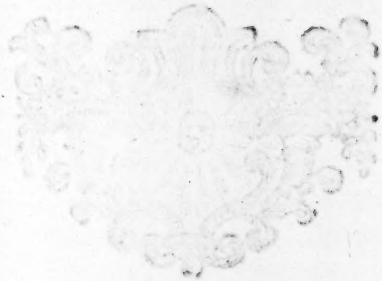
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And oft that you may be Wile, that you
may consider your latter End.

None to follow, you and I, O God, be a-
ble to stand, as it were, at the Throne; Power,
Glory, and Love.

May the Grace of the Lord Jesus Christ be
with you all.

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